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A NATIONWIDE POPULATION SCREENING PROGRAM  
AS PART OF A STRATEGY FOR REORGANIZING PRIMARY  
HEALTH CARE FOR DIABETES IN BRAZIL

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**Purpose:** As part of a Re-Organization Plan for the Care of Diabetes and Hypertension, the Brazilian Ministry of Health carried out nationwide community screening for diabetes (2001) and hypertension (2002). This report describes the main characteristics and results of the diabetes screening targeted to reach the 75% of citizens\_ 40 years (34.1 million individuals) who depend upon the National Health System for care.

**Methods:** Following an initial countrywide training of 13 029 health professionals for the diagnosis and treatment of diabetes, a mass media campaign invited citizens to participate in capillary glucose testing in March and April of 2001. Screening test positivity was defined as a fasting glucose of  $\geq 100$  mg/dl or a casual glucose of  $\geq 140$  mg/dl.

**Summary:** A total of 5314 (95.6%) municipalities participated and reported results. Of the 21.8 million (73% of the target) individuals tested, 3.4 million were positive (15.7%). Greater participation was seen in municipalities of small size, located in rural areas and having a greater percentage of citizens with schooling beyond the elementary level. During the 6 months following the beginning of the program, the system registered a net increase of 1.2 million ambulatory fasting venous glucose tests, presumably in great part for confirmatory testing.

**Conclusions:** The massive response to this screening program attests to the potential for such a campaign to raise population awareness of diabetes and to set the stage for capacity building for diabetes management at the primary care level.